



MAY 2005

Helping Organizations Retain Their Most Valuable Asset

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Getting Your Children to Wear Bike Helmets

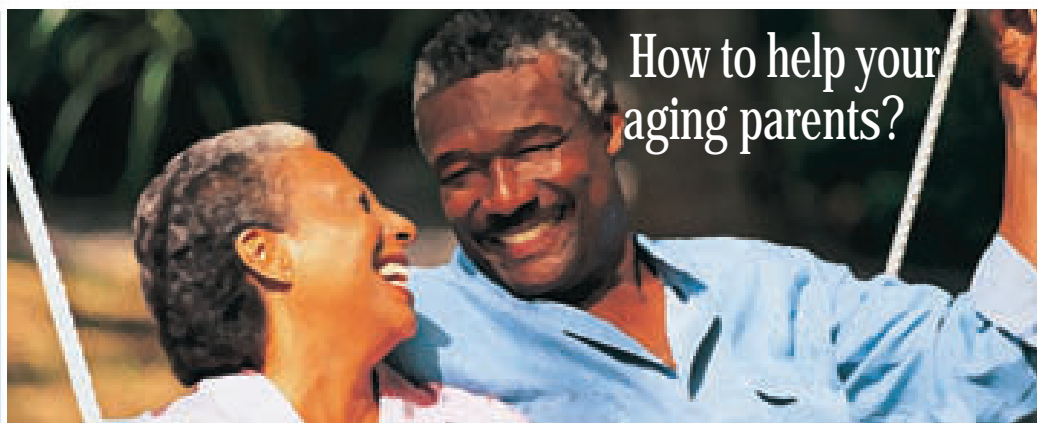
Wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of brain injury by as much as 88%. More than 75% of children ages 8 to 12 surveyed by the National Safe Kids Campaign said that they realized a brain injury could occur as a result of a bike crash and 65% of kids understood that brain injury could last a lifetime. However, less than 50% said they wore bike helmets on every bike ride and less than 33% wore them while riding scooters, skateboards and inline skates. So... if kids understand the risks, why are they so reluctant to wear helmets?

- 50% of the kids surveyed said they only ride near home, so they don't feel the need to wear a helmet.
- 43% said helmets are uncomfortable.
- 29% said they have control when they ride, so they don't need a helmet.
- 28% said they don't feel cool wearing a helmet.
- 27% said their parents don't make them wear one.

Here's the good news.... More than half of children admitted they would wear their helmet if their parents made them. Further, 49% said they would wear helmets if it was a law, and 47% would wear them if they were more comfortable.

If the majority of parents require their kids to wear helmets, it will be cool again, and the only issue will be choosing the coolest helmet around!

Source:
www.safekids.org



How to help your aging parents?

Seven million Americans now care for their aging parents, according to the latest research. By 2006, almost 40% of all U.S. workers will be more involved with caring for a parent than a child. Are you prepared to handle the difficult issues that can arise when faced with caring for an aging parent? The following guidelines can help ensure that your parent will receive the best care possible:

1. Find out your parent's wishes. How great is your parent's need for independence? What goals or dreams remain to be accomplished? What are your parent's needs and concerns about the future? What aspects of your parent's life are most important to him/her at this stage of life? Being near family? Seeing certain friends? Practicing his/her religion?

2. Be sure your parent's legal documents are in order. Has your parent executed all of the important legal documents and are they up-to-date? These would include an up-to-date Will, Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, and Durable Power of Attorney.

3. Learn your parent's desires regarding healthcare. Does your parent have a doctor who he/she trusts? If your parent is sick presently, what is his/her prognosis and how will it affect his/her personal care, housing, medical needs or finances? If you had to make

medical decisions for your parent, what would he/she want you to know? How would your parent weigh the benefits or burdens of various medical treatments? Is there a certain point after which your parent would no longer want aggressive medical care? Are advanced healthcare directives in place (Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney For Healthcare)?

4. Find out your parent's wishes regarding housing. How important is it to your parent to remain in his or her own home? Where would your parent want to live if he/she could no longer manage at home? Is your parent familiar with other housing options available? What if it isn't possible for your parent to live with another family member?

5. Learn about your parent's financial resources. What are your parent's present financial needs and potential future needs? Is he/she in a financial position to meet these needs? Is your parent's insurance - including life, health, home and auto - adequate and current?

6. Be sure that your parent has all relevant documents, records and information in order and be sure that you or another family member knows where they are. As your parent becomes increasingly frail, your family will need certain financial records, insurance information, advance healthcare directives, names of doctors, etc.

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Talk and plan together now about how your parent's affairs should be handled in the event he/she becomes incapacitated.

7. Learn about sources of help for seniors and housing options available. Chore services, housekeeping, home-delivered meals, senior recreation, day care, respite care and transportation assistance are some of the services available in many communities. Housing options include living with family, foster care, home sharing, board and care homes, senior apartments, continuing care communities or nursing homes.

8. Meet with family members to discuss various responsibilities should your parent become incapacitated. Who will be the designated agent on the Durable Power of Attorney For Healthcare or Durable Power of Attorney? Is in-home care a possibility?

Under what circumstances?

9. Don't offer personal home care unless you thoroughly understand and can meet the responsibilities and costs involved. Closely examine your family's ability to provide long-term in-home care for a frail and increasingly dependent parent. Consider the family's physical limits. Plan how your own needs will be met when your responsibility for the dependent parent increases.

10. Gather information now on how to care for an aging parent. There are numerous resources available which discuss: housing options, preparing wills and advance healthcare directives, long-distance care giving, protecting and maximizing financial resources, healthcare, community and home-care services, dealing with Alzheimer's Disease or other disorders, etc. An excellent book to use as an ongoing reference is: *How To Care For Aging Parents*, by Virginia Morris, Workman Publishing, New York.

Better Communication

For Couples



Why do we always seem to argue about "silly" things? How can I get my partner to open up more? These are examples of the kinds of questions couples often ask counselors. While every couple's situation is unique, these general guidelines can help to improve your communication:

Set An Example

If you want your partner to open up more, set the example by sharing more of your own thoughts and feelings. Try sharing interesting things you have read or overheard. Relate an experience that happened during the day.

Keep It Light

Try talking about something else besides the "problems." Pass on a joke or bit of gossip. Make a decision not to bring up the hassles with work, kids or finances, at least not until later.

Make "I" Statements

Avoid starting a sentence with "you." It sounds like an accusation or an invitation to fight (which it usually is!). Instead, put yourself on the line by sharing how it is for you. Say, "I think" or "I want" or "I feel." No cheating by saying, "I think that you...!"

Use "Feeling" Words

It's not fair to expect your partner to guess or "figure out" what you are feeling, as in "If

he loved me, he'd know!" Quit playing the guessing game and say it. Be sure to use feeling words like "sad," "happy," "excited," "angry," "worried," etc. Remember to start the sentence with an "I."

Ask Open-Ended Questions

Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." Otherwise, that's all you'll get. Try starting out the question with "how," or "what," as in "What do you think about..." "What happened next..." and "How do you feel about..." Don't ask "why." Chances are the other person doesn't know anyway and "why" can sound like an accusation.

Do Something Together

Experience has shown that people, particularly men, are more likely to share their feelings when they are doing something together that both can enjoy.

HMS is here to help

Remember, Human Management Services (HMS) is always available to help you or your dependents with any kind of personal, family or work-related concern or difficulty. If you need help, why not call an HMS counselor today? All HMS services are prepaid by your employer and strictly CONFIDENTIAL.

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If you need help with caring for an aging parent, Human Management Services (HMS) can provide you with counseling, referrals or information on eldercare issues such as: housing options, preparing wills and advance healthcare directives, long-distance care giving, protecting and maximizing financial resources, healthcare, community and home-care services, dealing with Alzheimer's Disease or other disorders, etc. Remember, HMS is always available to help you with any type of personal, family or work-related concern. If you need help, why not call an HMS counselor today? We're here to help.

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